

WORKSHOP ON MICROCREDIT SUMMIT Effective govt-NGOs linkage stressed

Microfinance (MF) NGOs of Khulna division laid emphasis on more effective government and non-government organisations linkage for orientation of the government functions about microfinance and building a common platform for the MF practitioners and networks for information gathering, analysis and their dissemination, says a press release.

They were speaking at the Third Regional Workshop on Microcredit Summit-2006 jointly organised by Plan Bangladesh, Credit and Development Forum (CDF), the Federation of NGOs in Bangladesh (FNB) and the International Network of Alternative Microfinance Institutions (INAFI) in association with The Daily Star at the Training and Resource Centre (TARC) of Brac in Jessor on Monday.

The workshop aimed at bringing up the voices from the grassroots MF organisations and expectations of Bangladesh from the Global Microcredit Summit.

Attended by the heads and the representatives of about 35 organisations, the participants highlighted the vital role of MF in Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and post regulatory envi-

rment with current discourse and way forward.

The speakers said there is a need for alternative fund sources, increasing capacity of the human resources of the sector, creating better cooperation between big and small scale MF institutions so that the small ones can go for scaling up and create more poverty impact.

Mid-level MFI leaders stressed the need for strengthening the poverty and social agenda in MF sector through improving outreach and enhancing the capacity of the sector and creation of second generation leadership.

Md Abdul Awal, director (Linkage) of CDF and Md Mohammad Tarequl Hoque, specialist, Family Economic Security Programme of Plan Bangladesh were present while Atiqun Nabi, executive director of INAFI Asia and INAFI Bangladesh acted as the moderator.

The workshop was the third of the series of five such exercises to be followed by a National Roundtable to be held in Dhaka next month.

Cancellation of Phulbari Coal Project demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Committee on Oil Gas Mineral-resources and Power Protection will stage a demonstration and lay siege to Asia Energy Office at Phulbari in Dinajpur on August 26 demanding cancellation of Phulbari Coal Project.

The committee also demanded eviction of Asia Energy Corporation from Bangladesh immediately.

The programme was announced yesterday at a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium where Member Secretary of the committee Prof Anu Mohammd urged the mass to make the demonstration a success.

In a written speech the committee said the Phulbari Coal Project will evict thousands of local people from their home, pollute the rivers at northern region, destroy biodiversity of the area and will damage ancient archaeological resources.

The committee alleged that

energy ministers, energy secretaries and some consultants misguided people and assisted the foreign company to get Phulbari Coal Project licence by receiving speed money.

The committee leader alleged that the Asia Energy is distributing colour television, cash, cloths and blankets among the locals to woo their support.

The committee also urged the local administration to support the protest meeting and siege programme as part of what they said as constitutional responsibility.

Engr Sheikh Mohammad Shahidullah, Prof MM Akash, Dr Shamsul Alam, Dr Akmal Hossain, Ruhin Hossain Prince, Tipu Biswas, Nurul Hasan, Bajlu Rashid Firoz, Advocate Abdus Salam, Zonaed Saki and Jalal Sardar, among others, were present.



Police prevent members of BCS General Education Association from staging a sit-in in front of Shikkha Bhaban in the city yesterday.

SHORTAGE OF FILMS CT scan service suspended at CMCH

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

The Computed Tomography (CT) Scan service of the Radiology and Imaging Department has remained suspended at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) for the last seven days due to shortage of films.

It is now forcing poor indoor patients of the hospital get their prescribed CT Scan done at a much higher cost outside the hospital everyday.

The patients could get their CT Scan done at a cheaper rate ranging from Tk 2,000 to Tk 4,000 while they

have to spend Tk 4,000 to Tk 10,000 in private diagnostic centers now, sources said.

Around forty patients from different departments of the hospital used to receive the service at the radiology department every week since its formal opening on April 29, sources said.

A medical technologist of the department preferring anonymity said, they informed the CMCH authorities a month ago about the shortage of the films but they took no early initiative that caused them to suspend the service.

BANGABANDHU MURDER CASE Execution of killers demanded

DU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of the opposition Awami League, yesterday formed a human chain demanding execution of the murderers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his family members.

Around one hundred leaders and activists of BCL joined the human chain on Dhaka University (DU) campus.

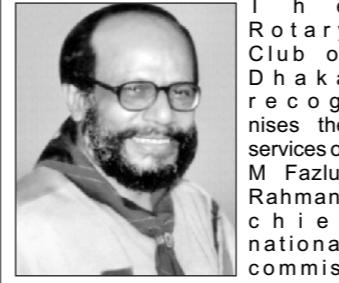
The nation observed the 31st death anniversary of Bangabandhu

on August 15 amid uncertainty over the trial of his killers.

On this day in 1975, Bangabandhu and his family members, except his daughters Sheikh Hasina and Sheikh Rehana who were abroad at that time, were brutally killed by a splinter group of the armed forces.

BCL President Mahmud Hasan Ripon, General Secretary Mahfuzul Haider Chowdhury Roton and other central leaders joined the human chain.

Fazlur Rahman awarded 'Paul Harris Fellow'



The Rotary Club of Dhaka recognises the services of M Fazlur Rahman, chief national commis-

sioner of Bangladesh Scout and former secretary of health ministry, for his contribution to society, especially in eradication of polio from the country, says a press release.

He was awarded the 'Paul Harris Fellow' of the Rotary International.

Former chief justice Mustafa Kamal handed over the award and a certificate to Fazlur Rahman at a programme of the Rotary Club of Dhaka recently.

Western Australian govt keen to strengthen economic ties with Dhaka

Bangladesh and Australia can

deepen their economic cooperation and the government of Western Australia is committed to further broadening the areas of cooperation between the two countries.

Kim M Chance, minister for agriculture and food, government of Western Australia, said this at a seminar on 'Trade and Investment Opportunities in Bangladesh' in Perth on Tuesday, according to a message received in Dhaka.

The Bangladesh High Commission and the Chamber of Commerce and Industries of Western Australia jointly organised the seminar.

Citing the people of Bangladesh as the most important resources and terming Bangladesh a 'serious country' for doing business, the minister called on the business community to develop a new business paradigm with a view to intensifying economic interaction between the two countries in the new global

context.

In his address of welcome, Bangladesh High Commissioner M Humayun Kabir emphasised the shared values between Bangladesh and Australia and urged the Western Australian business community to look at Bangladesh as a profitable venue for their future investment.

He also called on the business community to explore the possibility of engaging Bangladeshi skilled and semi-skilled labours in various sectors of the Australian economy.

The high commissioner underlined the creative and business-friendly policies of the government of Bangladesh. He also drew the attention to the fact that a convergence of approach was emerging from the 'Look East' policy of Bangladesh and the Australian policy of integration with Asia.

Md Restadul Islam, commercial counsellor of Bangladesh High Commission, gave a presentation on the business potentials of Bangladesh.

David Tyler, consultant for Wesfarmers Energy Private Ltd., spoke about his business experience in Bangladesh and urged the business community of Western Australia to take the advantage of business-friendly environment of Bangladesh.

Brian Hewitt, president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industries of Western Australia, Dr Abu Siddique of University of Western Australia and Graham Doppert, honorary consul general of Bangladesh in Perth, also spoke.

Australian businessmen, academics, chamber leaders, government officials and Bangladeshi entrepreneurs from Sydney and Dhaka attended the seminar.